

to permit statistically representative rankings. Schools cited most often by pr pros, in alphabetical order, are: Boston U; Northwestern (Medill); Syracuse U (Newhouse); U Md at College Park; U Missouri at Columbia.

WASTE OF TIME

Such rankings are seen as meaningless by many, along with all college rankings, since there is no way to accurately measure teaching/learning; and the best school will be different for varying individual needs. It's part of the American predilection for assigning horse-race numbers to everything.

Since respondents can have only limited knowledge of any program, this is a **reputational rating**. As always, perception rules. Cases (sure to make somebody angry): Missouri's j-schl is known for hating pr, barely teaches it. Those mentioning it most likely did so for its *journalism* sequence -- which ain't pr! Where are Ball State or Rowan (formerly Glassboro State) -- with their well-known faculty leaders & achieving students? Etc etc

If you're looking for rigorous graduate studies & faculty research, U Maryland certainly would be at or near the top of any list. Most of those mentioned either are or once were excellent. Other than to sell mags, no useful purpose seems served by the exercise. At least not until more trustworthy research criteria are employed.

Perhaps worst of all, the mag myopically views pr as part of journalism. PR isn't mentioned once in the accompanying text.

But to those whose reputations merited a rank, congratulations. PR after all is partly reputation management.

A TESTED COO'S VIEW OF PR'S VALUE -- & SOME ADVICE

Ramon Humke has lived thru takeover attempts, the reorientation of utilities & a few other crises. Now Pres & COO of Indianapolis Power & Light, he shared these views at the annual Indiana PR & Comms Conference:

- "The future will be more determined by an organization's communications than by development of the products or services it offers."
- "The law of gravity applies to communication. It requires a tremendous amount of effort to move it from bottom to top, but a casual comment by a sr mgr in the elevator quickly flows thruout the organization."
- "Bad news is worse than you first thought, and good news isn't as good as you thought it would be."
- "Disregard the first 2 versions of a crisis that you hear. About the third recitation you start getting close to the reality."
- "Multiple channels of communication are necessary to overcome distortion. Face-to-face risks distortion at each retelling so you must control it with other forms."

SEGMENTING PUBLICS AROUND ISSUES IN HYPER-POLITICAL TIMES

In 1987, Pew Research Center (formerly Times Mirror Center for The People & The Press) classified voters based on 3 characteristics -- 1) party affiliation, 2) political participation & 3) personal values & attitudes -- using the statistical technique called *cluster analysis*.

Typology was modified in '95. Nine values were measured including attitudes toward 1) gov't, 2) environmentalism, 3) business, 4) social welfare, 5) social policy, 6) religion, 7) race relations, 8) the military, 9) feelings of political alienation. Result: useful 10-group segmentation -- 3 Republican, 4 Democrat & 3 in between -- for strategizing on issues.

THE DIVIDED RIGHT

- **Enterprisers** (13% of adult population): Affluent, well-educated, predominantly white. Mainly characterized as pro-business, anti-gov't, anti-social welfare.
- **Moralists** (16%): Middle-aged, middle income, predominantly white, religious (more than half are Evangelicals). Also socially intolerant & anti-social welfare, militaristic, anti-big business & anti-big gov't. Former Dems drawn to the GOP's religious & cultural conservatism have increased this segment's size substantially since '87.
- **Libertarians** (8%): Highly-educated, affluent, predominately white male. Have Republican lineage but are uncomfortable with today's GOP, particularly its religious right. Pro-business, anti-gov't, anti-social welfare but highly tolerant, very low on religious faith, cynical about politicians.

THE DETACHED CENTER

- **New Economy Independents** (13%): Average income, young to middle aged, mostly female. Unanchored in either party, many supported Perot in '92. Have many conflicting values: strongly environmentalist but not believers in gov't regs; pro-social welfare but not very sympathetic to blacks; inclined to fundamental religious beliefs but highly tolerant of homosexuals.
- **Bystanders** (8%): Very young, poorly educated, low income. They opt out of the political process or aren't eligible to vote (high Hispanic concentration). Slightly more male than female, only claimed commitment is to environmentalism.
- **The Embittered** (9%): Low income, low education, middle-aged. One in five is black, four in ten have children under 18. Old ties to Democrats have eroded but they feel unwelcome in the GOP. Distrust



gov't, politicians, corporations. Are religious & socially intolerant. Strongly blame discrimination for lack of black progress, but are not strongly in favor of social welfare programs.

THE "NOT-SO" LEFT

- **Seculars (8%):** Highly educated, sophisticated, affluent, mostly white babyboomers & Generation X. Most socially tolerant group, driven by social issues. Only segment to embrace the "liberal" label. Very low in religious faith. Highly pro-environment, moderately pro-gov't, distrusting of business. Drifting from Democrats but not attracted to Republicans.
- **New Democrats (12%):** Mostly female, average income & education, as many white Evangelical Protestants as white Catholics. Religious but not intolerant, more pro-business than other Democrat groups. Reject discrimination as a barrier to black progress, are pro-gov't & environmentalist.
- **New Dealers (8%):** One of two oldest groups in the typology (1 in 4 is over 65), average education & low income. Once part of FDR's coalition, beneficiary of gov't programs, now turned off by politics. Strongly conservative on race & social welfare, strong on religion, moderate on social tolerance, pro-America, distrust politicians & business.
- **Partisan Poor (5%):** Very poor (38% with household income under \$20,000/yr), disadvantaged, about 4 in 10 in the South. This oldest typology group, rooted in New Deal coalition, believes more gov't spending on the poor is needed. More than 1/3 are non-whites. Very religious & socially intolerant.

(More from Pew at 1875 Eye st, NW, Wash DC 20006; 202/293-3126)

APPLYING PEW TYPOLOGIES TO AN ISSUE: BIG BUSINESS

The favorability rating of big companies is relatively high (60%), it has fallen 10% in 15 months to its lowest level of the 90s, finds a Pew survey done last October. Some findings:

- Only 4% believe big companies put the interests of their employees first; 46% say stockholders are put first; 34% say execs.
- 31% say customers should be first; 30% say employees; only 4% say top execs. From the typology, Enterprisers & Moralists put employees first; Libertarians put employees second, after stockholders. But all 3 put top execs lowest on their list, lower even than the average of the Independent & Democrat groups.
- 72% want gov't to look more closely at mergers of big companies.
- 77% feel too much power is concentrated in a few large companies, tho this figure has remained relatively steady for more than a year.
- A slim majority say gov't regs of business do more harm than good (50% vs. 45%) -- "perhaps reflecting more the historic antipathy of Americans toward gov't than sympathy for business."
- Seen as "greatest threat to people like themselves" are gov't (50%), news media (15%), business (13%), Wall Street banks & investment companies (8%), entertainment industry (5%).

CORPORATE ANNUAL MEETINGS BELLWETHER OF ISSUES AGENDA

1) Job security, 2) exec compensation & 3) the conflict between Wall Street & Main Street will be issues raised at corporate annual meetings this spring, predicts Michael Rosenbaum of The Financial Relations Board.

Annual meetings tend to attract more individual investors than investment professionals. While the latter focus more on financials, the former show above average concern for community or human issues.

- **Dangerous "bounty" syndrome.** "Companies that lay off significant numbers of workers as a means of building their competitive standing may be rewarded in the stock market, owing to the expected increase in future earnings & share values. That increase in profitability, perversely, can lead to higher compensation to the executives responsible. In turn, the man on the street sees each unemployed person as a 'bounty' paid to the chief executive officer who approved the layoff."
- **Competition the driver.** "It is critical that executives explain these developments in terms of competitive issues, including the need to preserve other jobs by keeping costs below those of competitors. Open discussion of the sometimes conflicting interests of shareholders & employees also is appropriate, giving the questioners further insights into the challenge of balancing different priorities."
- **Exec compensation issue** will be the toughest for most companies, he feels. "It's difficult to convince most individual shareholders that chief executive compensation packages are 'competitive' or to win any sympathy for the CEO even in a year when compensation declines."
- **Such conflicts are amplified by politicians & media.** Company chairmen preparing to meet investors at their annual meetings should think long & hard about how they will handle these issues, advises Rosenbaum.

"RANKING" OF TEACHING PROGRAMS SHOWS POWER OF PERCEPTION

PR program at U Md's College of Journalism & Mass Communication is ranked best in the nation by US News & World Report (3/18/96). Jim Grunig chaired the sequence in '95; Lauri Grunig is its current chair.

340 deans & leading faculty at all grad programs in *journalism & mass com'ns* were surveyed -- thus omitting pr sequences in *speech com'ns*, which now outnumber those in journalism (pr 7/12/93). 40% responded. Ranked next are:

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| 2) U Florida; | 7) U Texas at Austin; | 12) U Missouri at |
| 3) Syracuse (Newhouse); | 9) Northwestern | Columbia; |
| 4) U Georgia; | (Medill); | 12) U SCar at Columbia; |
| 5) UNC at Chapel Hill; | 10) Michigan State; | 12) U Wisc at Madison; |
| 6) San Diego State; | 11) CalState Fullerton; | 15) Boston U. |
| 7) Ohio U; | | |

150 pr execs were also surveyed with the aim to rank schools by combining the results of the academics & pros. But execs' response rate was too low